

Remarks

Claims 1 and 3-24 were pending in the application. Claims 1, 3-9 and 15-22 were rejected. Claims 10 and 11 were merely objected to and claims 12-14 and 23 were allowed. By the foregoing amendment, claims 10 and 11 are canceled, no claims are amended, and claims 25-30 are added. No new matter is presented.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 10-14 and 23. Claims 10 and 11 have been canceled. New claim 25 is supported by claim 10. Claim 25, however, does not identify the channel as in the first face (previously added to claim 1 and now contained in dependent claim 26). Claim 25 also more broadly characterizes the previously-identified furnace as a vessel with the furnace identification moved to dependent claim 27 ("vessel" being supported by original and allowed claim 12). Claim 25 also omits the characterization of the gas as "soot blower gas" to avoid identification of a single particular function. Dependent claim 28 is supported by former claim 11. New dependent claim 29 is supported by the last nine lines of paragraph [0042]. Support for claim 30 is found in the penultimate sentence of paragraph [0042].

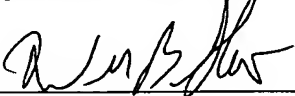
Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1, 3-9 (the Office action stating 1-9, although 2 was previously canceled), 15-22, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(2). The Office action read: "The invention described in these claims are not considered to be directed to what the applicants invention is as disclosed by the specification." Office action, page 2. These claims all reference structural features of the flange without explicitly referencing any particular use (e.g., in a soot blower). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Although Applicant has invented the claimed flange and its broad cooling methods in the context of detonative cleaning, the invention should not be so limited. The flange and its associated methods may be used in other fields. These may even include otherwise non-obvious and/or presently unknown uses and fields. The specification does not indicate any contrary intention (see, e.g, the penultimate sentence of paragraph [0042]).

Accordingly, Applicant submits that claims 1, 3-9, and 12-30 are in condition for allowance. Please charge any fees or deficiency or credit any overpayment to the Deposit Account of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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